



Donald T. DiFrancesco  
Acting Governor

Jane M. Kenny  
Commissioner

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# Community Matters

A Newsletter for the Employees of the Department of Community Affairs

## VIEWPOINT

### Rays of Light

by Commissioner Jane M. Kenny

Out of our darkest day have come rays of light.

We've seen them on television and in our neighborhoods – actions large and small that have helped unite our country and our communities in the aftermath of incredible tragedy.

Those rays of light are also evident at DCA.

We see them in our employees, who crowd the lobby and balconies of our building to observe a moment of silence, who make red, white and blue ribbons for co-workers, who give blood, donate time, money or supplies, comfort friends or express their concern in countless other ways.

And we see those rays of light in our divisions, which have offered services and assistance to people and towns directly affected by the events of September 11.

The Homelessness Prevention Program is reaching out to families that may experience trouble paying the rent or mortgage as a result of the attack.

Division of Fire Safety officials staffed the Office of Emergency Management day and night, helping to coordinate New Jersey's immediate response to the disaster at the World Trade Center.

The Division of Local Government Services is offering assistance to towns whose budgets have been undone by the cost of response and recovery.

The Division of Housing and Community Resources is coordinating federal funds to assist community action agencies that have helped out in the crisis.

Our state government, led by Acting Governor DiFrancesco, has been doing all it can to help

*Continued on page 2*



## DCA Pitches In

### *Divisions Respond to Crisis; Blood Drive Set*

DCA is helping New Jersey state government respond in the aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center.

At least three divisions have provided or offered government services in the wake of the tragic events of September 11.

The Division of Fire Safety helped staff round-the-clock operations at the state Office of Emergency Management and assisted in mobilizing equipment and personnel to supplement recovery efforts.

The Division of Local Government Services is offering technical assistance to any municipality that experiences budget problems resulting from disaster response or recovery.

The Division of Housing and Community Resources, through its Homelessness Prevention Program, is distributing a flyer alerting families directly affected by the disaster that they may be eligible to receive rental or mortgage assistance. And the division stands ready to channel additional federal funds to community action agencies that are providing assistance.

The activity came as DCA employees took advantage of opportunities to remember the victims of the attacks on America.

Commissioner Jane M. Kenny and Secretary of State DeForest B. Soaries, Jr. led a brief ceremony in the DCA lobby on Friday, September 14, to discuss the tragedy and to observe a moment of silence in honor of the victims and their families. The lobby was crowded back to the elevators, and many employees participated from the second and third floor balconies.

"We grieve with our nation over the loss of life and the untold personal impact of these terrible events," said Commissioner Kenny. "You should know that our state government – including DCA – is doing all it can to assist in the aftermath of this disaster."

A number of DCA employees also took part in an Hour of Remembrance ceremony at the War Memorial last Thursday.

Meanwhile, DCA has announced a blood drive on October 17 to help in the effort to boost blood supplies.

## DCA to Review Security Issues

DCA is forming a Security Task Force to strengthen workplace plans for dealing with emergency situations.

The task force is being formed at the suggestion of former Community Building member **Roseanne Rizza**. Human Resources Director **Greg Vida** and Internal Services Director **Ray Montgomery** are co-chairing the task force at the request of Commissioner Kenny.

The task force is expected to include representatives of DCA, its unions, the State Police and the Department of the Treasury. The task force will undertake a comprehensive review of DCA's security procedures, its evacuation plans and a variety of other safety issues.

## Crisis Information

The following is a list of hotline numbers and websites to offer assistance or receive information relating to the World Trade Center attack:

### **1-800-HELP NOW**

American Red Cross monetary donations.

### **1-800-SAL ARMY**

Salvation Army monetary donations.

### **1-800-GIVE LIFE**

American Red Cross blood donations.

### **www.redcross.org**

American Red Cross

### **www.state.nj.us**

State of New Jersey website with updated crisis information.

## Progress Made on Air Quality Concerns

As a result of DCA's continued demands of the Treasury Department, every ceiling air diffuser in the DCA building will be tested starting on October 8 as part of the department's continuing efforts to improve indoor air quality.

Division of Codes and Standards Director **William Connolly** said the workers would make necessary adjustments to the HVAC system and identify deficient equipment. The Codes and Standards division will oversee the work.

DCA officials said the work would serve to improve the building's airflow.

## Landmarks to be Senior Housing

Two Burlington City landmarks are being restored and converted into affordable senior housing with the help of funding from DCA and its agencies.

DCA Commissioner Jane M. Kenny and Burlington City Mayor Herman Costello participated with other officials in a ceremony to launch the \$8.8 million restoration work.

"Preserving these buildings gives us a link to the past while improving the quality of life for people today," said Commissioner Kenny.

Both sites – the Metropolitan Inn and West Electronics – are on the National Register of Historic Places.

The site of the Metropolitan Inn, also known as Alexander's Inn, was once home to the Blue Anchor Tavern where New Jersey's provincial Congress met on July 2, 1776, and formally declared independence from Great Britain. After fire damaged the tavern, the current four-story structure was built there in 1856 and became the city's premier hotel, serving guests such as General Ulysses S. Grant and Woodrow Wilson.

When the restoration is complete, the Metropolitan Inn will offer 16 units of senior housing as well as commercial space on the first floor.

West Electronics, built in the 1880s, was formerly the J.F. Budd Baby Shoe Factory – one of the largest shoe manufacturers in the world at the turn of the century.

Upon completion of the renovation, the building will offer 31 units of affordable housing for seniors.

In addition to DCA's Balanced Housing program, state funding for the restorations is being provided by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency and the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority.

## Officials Mark Start of East Orange Units

State and local officials last week marked the start of a \$17 million, 96-unit affordable housing and commercial development in East Orange.

The Dr. King Plaza development is receiving nearly \$14 million in financing from DCA and its affiliated agencies, the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA) and the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority (NJRA). The housing is also receiving funds from federal, county and local sources, as well as the developer, the RPM Development Group.

The development will be a five-story, multi-family building that includes a first floor retail area. On the residential floors, there will be 88 two-bedroom units and eight three-bedroom units. Eighty percent of the units will be at the affordable income range and 20 percent will be at market rate. The development includes parking and amenities.

The development is receiving \$3.44 million from DCA's Balanced Housing Program, \$9.46 million in financing from the HMFA, and \$1 million from NJRA's Brownfields Program.

Dr. King Plaza represents the culmination of more than 10 years of comprehensive planning by the city.

## Dealing with Disaster

*Summarized from material provided  
by the American Red Cross of Central New Jersey*

Disasters create an abrupt change in reality.

For the millions of people connected to the recent tragic events only by media coverage, it means the loss of a measure of security and safety and invulnerability.

You can help yourself and others deal with common reactions to the incidents. Here's how:

- ✂ **Reduce the fuel.** High levels of anxiety fueled by watching TV, listening to the radio and reading about the disaster can be lowered by limiting your exposure to the sights and sounds of the disaster.
- ✂ **Focus on the positive.** Think about the courage and commitment of the responders – police, fire, EMS, and search and rescue professionals, doctors, nurses, and others.
- ✂ **Recognize your own feelings.** Know that the physical and emotional problems you are having are stress related helps to reduce their effect on you. It helps to know that this is a shared experience.
- ✂ **Talk to others about your feelings.** Understand that they are shared by millions of people around the world.
- ✂ **Accept help from others.** If you need help putting your feelings in perspective, talk to a mental health worker. They are trained in crisis intervention, and know that certain reactions are normal and usual following this type of event.
- ✂ **Deal with your anger.** Do not take out your unresolved anger on your family. Strenuous physical activity is one way to deal with anger. Take a brisk walk, go for a run, scrub a floor, or clean house. Don't allow your anger to grow into hate.
- ✂ **Reach out.** Offer to listen to others who need to talk.
- ✂ **Do something you enjoy.** Whenever possible, take a few minutes to look out the window at the sunshine and the flowers. Remember that you are still free and that there is still beauty in the world. It's OK to smile; in fact, it's good for you, will make you feel better, and in no way is disrespectful.
- ✂ **Stay connected with your usual support systems.** Stay in touch with your religious/spiritual leaders, social groups, neighbors, family and friends.

For additional information, contact the American Red Cross of Central New Jersey at 609-951-8550 or at [www.njredcross.org](http://www.njredcross.org)

## Rays of Light...continued

the victims and their families, and to promote tolerance in our diverse state. We've had a unified response to the needs and concerns of our fellow citizens in New York and here in New Jersey.

When tragedy of such an immense proportion occurs, we're all affected in some manner. We need to help each other work our way through the changed landscape.

We will never forget those terrible images of destruction. More importantly, we will never forget the images of people, organizations and government helping to ease the pain in a time of need.

I am thankful for the assistance DCA employees have provided both personally and professionally in response to this tragedy. You represent the ideals of a department committed to the mission of helping one another.

**Community Matters** is a publication of the **New Jersey Department of Community Affairs**, 101 South Broad Street, Trenton, NJ 08625. The newsletter is published monthly and distributed to department employees.

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**Photos:** Bryce Rudolph

# Housing and Community Development Conference



Commissioner Kenny stops at one of the trade show booths at the Seventh Annual Governor's Conference on Housing and Community Development.

More comprehensive than ever, the Governor's Conference on Housing and Community Development was held this week in Atlantic City, attracting more than 800 participants for an opportunity to exchange ideas, update progress, network with other professionals, and create new partnerships.

The seventh annual conference featured 40 informational workshops over the course of a day and a half. The sessions covered many of the programs

offered by the conference sponsors – the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, DCA's Division of Housing and Community Resources, the Council on Affordable Housing, the Office of State Planning and the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority.

Running concurrently with the conference was a massive trade show that drew a record 64 exhibitors with products and brochures that covered a range of topics and services.

The conference also included a networking reception to allow participants to meet each other and share ideas.

The success of the conference was the result of a 25-member committee co-chaired by Ann Merlino and Susan Sands of HMFA. The committee included members from DCA and its affiliated agencies.

The well-orchestrated affair, which took months to plan, received high marks from the attendees.

In welcoming the participants, DCA Deputy Commissioner Anthony Cancro said, "As you know, the housing and community development field can be extremely competitive, complex and challenging. It requires expertise in multiple disciplines – real estate, construction, finance and government, to name a few. To be successful, you need to learn all you can, and this conference is a tremendous learning opportunity, and a great networking opportunity as well."

## State Pledge Funds For New Housing

Acting Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco this week announced \$150 million in funding that would create new homeownership opportunities and rental housing for New Jersey residents of all incomes.

The announcement was made on the Governor's behalf by DCA Commissioner Jane M. Kenny at this week's Seventh Annual Governor's Conference on Housing and Community Development.

Approximately \$110 million in proceeds from the sale of taxable and tax-exempt bonds will allow the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA) to finance 15 multi-family developments in 14 municipalities. These developments will create 1,900 new units of affordable housing for families and senior citizens.

The state will set aside \$10 million in subsidy funds for Phase 10 of the HMFA's Urban Home Ownership Recovery Program (UHORP). These subsidy funds will be combined with construction financing to produce up to 400 units of new for-sale housing for families of all income levels. To date, UHORP has invested \$114 million in the construction of over 2,200 homeownership units in 22 urban areas.

An initial funding allocation of \$15 million will go to the new HMFA Smart Living program. Smart Living is designed to promote the redevelopment of the state's urban areas through market-rate rental housing in keeping with the State Plan.

The second new initiative, the Housing Investment Trust Fund, will provide an ongoing source of capital to meet the needs of low-income New Jersey residents. The initial \$15 million program under HMFA's Housing Investment Trust will provide low interest flexible secondary mortgage loans to assist in the production of affordable rental housing on a statewide basis.

## Progress Report Cites Gains

Since 1994, New Jersey programs have helped finance \$3.1 billion in housing opportunities, according to a progress report released at this week's Seventh Annual Governor's Conference on Housing and Community Development.

Those opportunities include 11,080 new rental units, 18,346 new home ownership units and 57,000 new construction jobs, the report states. The figures do not include the \$150 million in funding for housing announced this week by the DiFrancesco Administration.

The 2001 Community Development Progress Report, prepared by DCA, highlights the work of the state and its partners in revitalizing cities and neighborhoods, particularly through new housing opportunities.

"Professionals in the housing and community development field, whether in the private, public or non-profit sectors, share a mission to see that every family in New Jersey has a safe and decent place to call home," the report states. "We also share ... a substantial record of achievement."

The report outlines the success of 19 programs offered by DCA and its affiliated agencies to help promote housing and community development.

"We have increased the supply of affordable housing and raised its quality to match the rising aspirations of its residents. We have pushed home ownership to an all time high by tearing down barriers for young families, single parents and new immigrants. Furthermore, our community development programs have strengthened neighborhoods in cities and in older suburbs where a remarkable story of revitalization is taking place," the report states.

DCA Commissioner Jane M. Kenny said the progress report contains more than numbers.

"The report also tells about some of the neighborhoods and programs behind those numbers," said Commissioner Kenny. "Administrations may change, but I'm confident that the strong partnership between the state and local leaders in the housing and community development field will remain firm. That's because, quite simply, the community development approach gets results. It works."





# Community Building News

Prayers; Flags; Candles; Songs; Slogans; Donations of supplies, money and blood. Unselfish and untiring rescue efforts. Images indelibly stamped on our collective memories as our nation's response to a criminal act more heinous than anything ever witnessed in the United States. We have all been affected, directly or indirectly, by the events of September 11th and the days that follow. Nothing that can be said or written can ever fully console the families and friends of those killed and missing. Our thoughts, prayers and sympathy go out to them. There is no sense to be found in a senseless act.

Although we all feel that this was an attack on America, it was just as much an attack on the civilized world, as are all acts of violence and murder whether in Northern Ireland or Southern Africa, South America or Serbia, Israel or Palestine, Trenton or Newark. Let us all hope and pray that our nation's communal desire for justice is stronger than its desire for revenge. Terrorism has proven to be a many headed monster that grows two heads each time one is cut off by violence. May our leaders recognize the failures to combat this beast in the past and instead find ways to eliminate the fuel that feeds it.

*"Imagine all the people - living life in peace." (John Lennon)*

- Community Building Public Relations Committee  
Peggy Fritz, Pat Fowler, Jim Cordingley,  
Ethel Henderson, Vicky Jones

## Question Results

**September's Question** – What information would you like to see covered or discussed in a PC Users' Group meeting?

We received a number of responses such as, how to book a conference room, Task on Outlook and Access and Publisher. It was also found that employees are not quite sure what the PC Users' Group is about. In light of this, we offer you the following:

The Division of Housing and Community Resources' Organizational Development Office initiated a Personal Computer Users' Group early in 1998 to bring together people at different levels of knowledge to discuss computer hardware and software issues. Today, more than ever, the merits of working together has become even more important since the Department migrated from the previous system to a system that is on the cutting edge of computer technology.

Some of the topics that have been covered to date are: Word Perfect, Word, Excel Spreadsheets, Outlook, Utility Programs, Internet Search Engines, Power Point, Maintaining and Caring for your PC, Access etc. Since changes occur rapidly in computer technology, and since so many employees may not have had a computer when a topic was first discussed, we would be delighted to repeat a topic that will help you with your job and so that we become more knowledgeable.

Well over 100 staff from throughout the Department have participated in the group sessions so far. DCA employees serve as session leaders who offer their expertise in a particular topic. All are welcome to attend and participate with supervisory approval. The format of the sessions varies with the presenters, but overall, the sessions are informal. For more information, or to request a topic be taught or to volunteer to lead a group session, please contact Pat Fowler at 1-3274 or via e-mail at pfowler@dca.state.nj.us.

## Who is this Cutie Pie???

Hint: He generally can be found on the 5th floor but spends a lot of time on the 6th floor as well.

### Who was this Cutie Pie???



This is Joanne today. The Community Building Public Relations Committee would like to apologize for reprinting her baby picture in the August issue.



## Roundtable/Recommendations Update

**Recommendation** – Provide information on all "perks or reimbursements" available to employees.

If this recommendation affects you, be sure to attend the "Fiscal-Travel Reimbursement Discussion" on September 18.

**Recommendation** – Community Building suggestion/comment box...

We do make a difference! Every suggestion from the Community Building Suggestion Box is read (none are too small or unimportant). Below is a list of some that have been implemented!

Thanks to:

- ✍ **Bob Haug** - we now have low heat/energy efficient light bulbs in elevators
- ✍ **Phyllis Walker** - there will be defibrillators on each floor, with trained personnel, (in progress with the Health and Safety Committee)
- ✍ **Elliot Kleiman and Jacques Lebel** - a recycling committee was formed, in Spring of 2001, to address recycling policies and procedures
- ✍ **Ron Cesaretti** - art work is now displayed on the lobby hallway walls
- ✍ **Mary Wooten** - there are weight filled cigarette cans in the smoking area outside of our DCA building

Anonymous entries, which have been implemented, include: job postings' glass case on 1st floor by cafeteria; security patrol in lots 5A and 5B; better quality of transparent tape; new lighting in 4th floor men's room; home/personal addresses no longer on broadcast notices or in global e-mail address book; Building Our Future Day; ice machine repaired/replaced; improved appearance of lobby; water fountains fixed; and improved air quality throughout the building is in progress and should be repaired by the end of this year (update to follow shortly).

There are a number of suggestions that are currently under review. We will keep you posted.

Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to submit suggestions. Keep them coming.

## Upcoming Events

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Sept. 28 | "Fiscal-Travel Reimbursement Discussion," Room 129 – 2-3pm |
| Oct. 23  | PC User Group–GIS Overview–Making Maps, Room 129 – 2pm     |
| Oct. 3   | "Financial Planning for College," Room 129 – 12pm          |
| Oct. 30  | "Managing Time Your Way," Room 521 – 12:15 and 1:15        |